Holding a Successful Meeting

Now that you have scheduled a meeting with your legislator or his/her staff member, you need to prepare for your meeting. The keys to successful and productive meeting are simple:

1. **Begin with the goal in mind:** Our purpose is simply to introduce eye banking to an audience that is unaware of us. They just need to know the basics; recovery, processing, outcomes and reimbursement.

2. **Make it relevant:** A legislator’s primary interest is his or her constituents. Talk about the number of corneas you provided, the hospitals you work with, specific recipients or donor families you’ve served. Also remember that you, or your eye bank, are also a constituent, so talk about your location and your role within the community.

3. **Make it memorable:** Yours is just one of a half-dozen meetings the staffer will have today, so help them remember you by speaking with enthusiasm, using anecdotes whenever possible and leaving behind your business card and information about your eye bank.

4. **Be concise:** You have a lot to say and a finite amount of time to say it; organize your presentation to open with the most pertinent information (how your eye bank serves the legislator’s constituents) and then fill in the details through anecdotes. Solicit questions throughout your presentation to clarify misunderstandings. If you have a 30-minute meeting, complete your remarks within 20 minutes to allow for questions.

5. **Leave-behind materials:** EBAA will prepare packets of information about eye banking that you can leave after your visit. Please print and bring 1-2 pages of information that’s specific to your eye bank and emphasizes your connection to the community that you can add to these folders. Also bring business cards and distribute them liberally.

6. **Say thank you:** You’ll be sending a thank you note after your meeting, so be sure to collect a business card from everyone with whom you meet. Also inform the legislator or staffer that EBAA staff will follow up with them in the week following your meeting.

7. **Extend an invitation:** Please invite the legislator and his/her health policy staffers to our Congressional Reception. We will have already sent them an invitation, but we will provide printed invitations you can leave behind.

8. **Dress for Success:** While business casual is appropriate for the Leadership portion of the conference, you want to make an impression on the Hill, so please wear a business suit on Thursday.

9. **Report back to EBAA:** After your meeting, please complete a Legislative Visit Debriefing Form so we can follow up on your visits with the legislator’s office.

10. **Relax:** Legislators and their staff meet with people like you every day; they’re interested in what you do and how you serve their constituents. You really can’t mess it up, so relax and enjoy your visit.

Refer to the tools and resources on EBAA’s Grassroots Advocacy page for more information.